

ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT 2020

COMOX VALLEY AIRPORT YQQ

The Journey Continues



Message from the Chair and CEO

The fiscal year that ended on March 31, 2020 was one of strong performance for the Comox Valley Airport. We saw near-record passenger volume throughout, serving over 396,000 travelers.

Though this volume is large enough to test the capacity of our terminal, we truly fulfilled our mission throughout the year: to provide safe and efficient services while enabling the economic development of the Comox Valley.

At the start of the year, the worldwide grounding of Boeing 737 Max 8 aircraft resulted in a significant loss of fleet capacity for both WestJet and Air Canada, the national airlines serving Comox. It was gratifying that although the size and type of some of the aircraft landing at Comox were different, we retained the routes served, and flight frequencies on those routes. That meant that the grounding caused minimal disruption to air travel for our region. We believe the continuity of air service also signaled airlines' underlying confidence in the viability of the Comox Valley's market for air travel.

In November, our Chief Executive Officer, Fred Bigelow, took long-term leave for health reasons. Every member of the Board of Directors, as well as the employee team extends their very warmest wishes to Fred and we thank him for his ongoing advisory support.

December saw a replica Nieuport 11 biplane installed over the departures lounge. It was given to us in proud recognition of all Canadian Veterans, and bears the Comox 19 Wing Base Badge which reads: "Ai Quanesut" from the Pentlatch language, over a Thunderbird in the art style of Kwakwaka'wakw Nation. This translates as "By Vigilance Prepared", a motto bestowed by the K'omoks First Nation.

Everyone is aware of the declaration of the global pandemic in March. The Comox Valley Airport was prepared, invoking its own emergency plan and acting promptly to protect passengers, employees, and the public with new operating protocols and procedures. We remained open to support essential and humanitarian travel. As well, we are taking the opportunity to tackle maintenance jobs and upgrades that are easier to do in uncrowded conditions.

The fiscal year ended with the airport in a secure financial position, with strongly positive net cash flow and zero debt. This stands us in good stead to weather the financial turbulence created by the pandemic.

A big thank you goes to Frank Van Gisbergen who stepped down as Chair of the Board of Directors in January, after five years in the role. We are most fortunate to have access to his advice as a continuing Board Director.

At the moment, it is uncertain whether the market for business and pleasure air travel will recover swiftly, or only gradually in the coming years. However, whenever recovery occurs, be assured that the Comox Valley Airport stands ready to serve, with efficiency and safety as top priorities.

YQQ is ready to play a vital role in the region's economic recovery.



CVAC Chair Martin Crilly



Acting CEO Alex Robertson

Our Mission

Provide safe and efficient air service facilities, and enable the economic development of the Comox Valley.

Vision

The Comox Valley Airport is the aviation gateway of the North Island.

Goals

- Air Service
- Master Plan
- Finances
- Employees

Values

- Safety
- Quality
- Accountability
- Economic Development
- Sustainability

Safety

We ensure that the safety and security of our customers, staff, facilities, and environment is a primary concern in all aspects of doing business.

CVAC operations conducted a live fuel spill and fire simulation exercise with participation from 19 Wing, the Comox Fire Department, the RCMP and BC Ambulance.

A discussion-based exercise was completed to test the Transport Canada changes to the Aviation Security Levels (AVSEC).

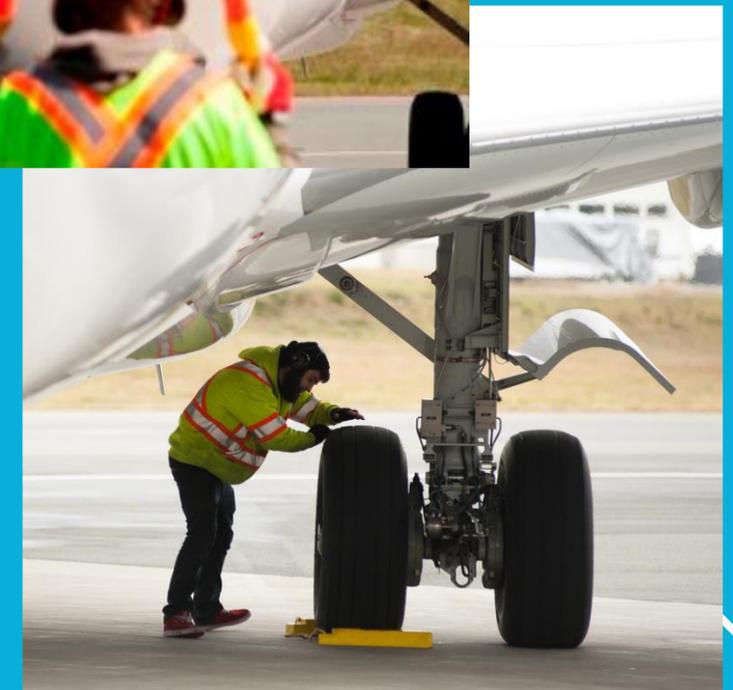
Rapid damage assessment and emergency procedures were tested as part of the annual BC Shakeout, the province's earthquake readiness exercise.

There is ongoing participation by airport fuelers in Shell Aviation's Goal Zero safety program.

Security cameras were added to enhance the airport surveillance capabilities.

Delineators were installed in the paved lot, further enhancing safety markings.

An increased focus on communication to both the public and the staff has allowed the airport to effectively manage the health and safety changes resulting from the pandemic.



Quality

We are motivated by customer expectations to provide quality facilities and services in a customer-sensitive and service-driven manner.



YQQ embraced the *buy local* appeal of VIEA's **Island Good** brand.

Now it is easy to find these Vancouver Island products for sale in the café and gift shop.



- New, touchless taps and easier to clean counters in public washrooms were installed as part of planned upgrades.
- EcoFlex walkways were installed to improve accessibility in the gravel parking lots.
- CVAC staff take pride in their work, and this commitment is evident throughout the terminal.



CEO Fred Bigelow ,
VIEA Executive Director George Hanson

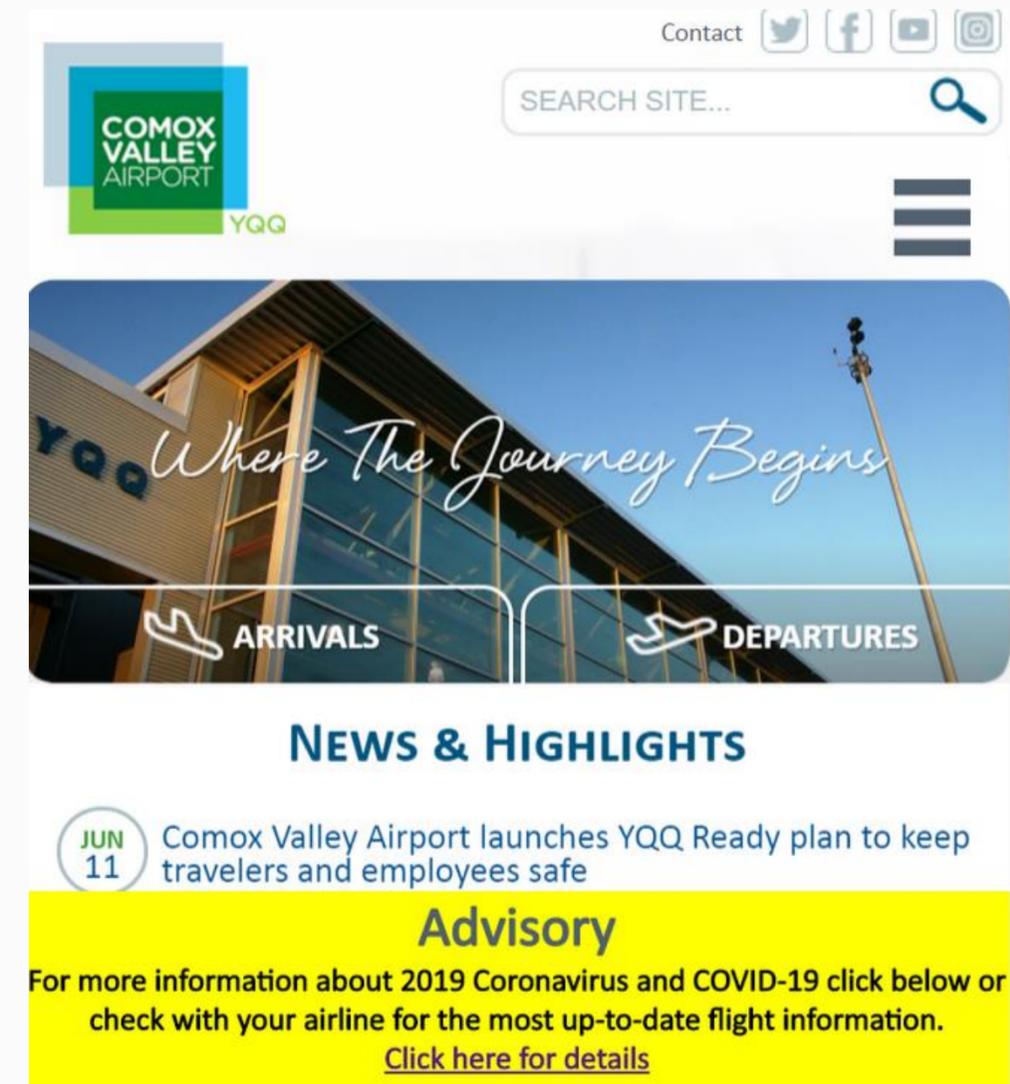
Accountability

We are accountable for our actions, and we demonstrate integrity in our business relations, utilization of resources, treatment of customers and staff, and the general conduct of our business.

- Proactive communication measures were initiated to ensure public awareness of the airport's evolving procedures during the pandemic.
- Website emergency activation permitted immediate access to current information, and links to relevant advisories and agencies.

Our sponsorship of community agencies and events:

- Discover Comox Valley Tourism Industry Mini-Conference
- CV Chamber 100th Anniversary
- Support and collaboration with chambers and destination marketing organizations
- Participation in CVED's Innovation 2030 Economic Master Planning sessions



Contact    

SEARCH SITE... 

COMOX VALLEY AIRPORT YQQ

Where The Journey Begins

ARRIVALS DEPARTURES

NEWS & HIGHLIGHTS

JUN 11 Comox Valley Airport launches YQQ Ready plan to keep travelers and employees safe

Advisory

For more information about 2019 Coronavirus and COVID-19 click below or check with your airline for the most up-to-date flight information.
[Click here for details](#)

Economic Development

Canada's airports are crucial to the economic vitality of the communities they serve.

Service from Comox Valley Airport is estimated to facilitate:



- 560 Jobs



- 37M Wages



- 54M GDP



- 137M Economic Output



- 20M Taxes

Sustainability

We are committed to ensuring that all aspects of airport operations and practices are environmentally and financially sustainable.

- Constructed a glycol testing station to protect the downstream environment
 - Addition of energy efficient replacement fixtures (LED)
 - Installation of a public bike station



We act in accordance with our values, not wavering from doing so even when it is difficult.



- After the declaration of a global pandemic, YQQ remained open to provide essential access for emergency and humanitarian air service.
- Nearly \$5000 was donated to local charities, and we supported dozens of charitable initiatives undertaken by staff, tenants, and volunteers.
- Our operations team developed prompt solutions to evolving safety concerns brought on by the pandemic.



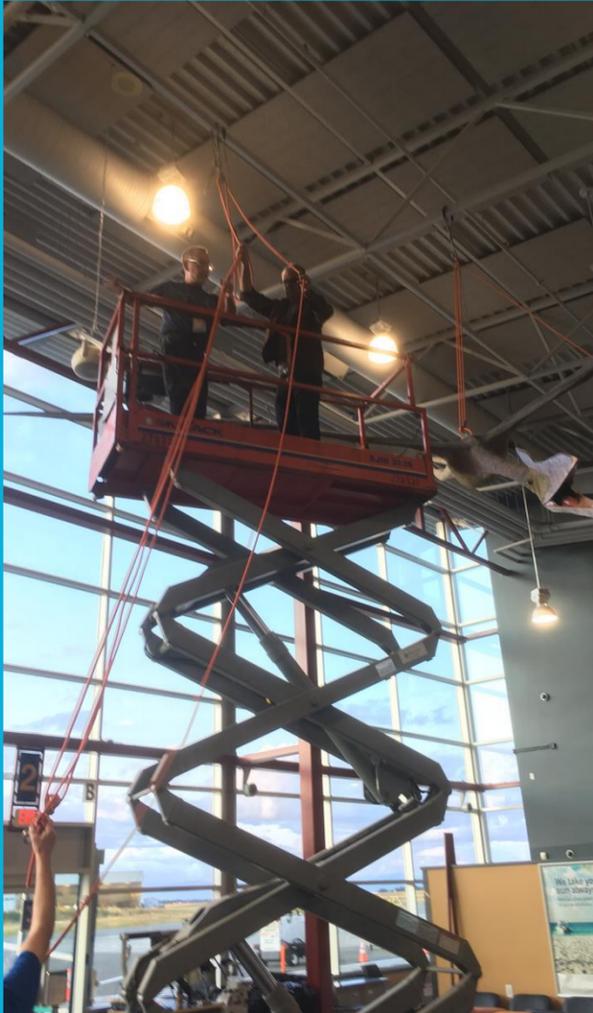
YQQ is a trusted business partner, driven to support the success of regional stakeholders.

Year in Review



Capital Expenditures

- HVAC system compressor replacement
- Apron assessment
- Live edge counter created by local craftsman
- Increased seating and tables
- Children's play area
- Eco-Flex walkways in gravel lots
- Public bike station

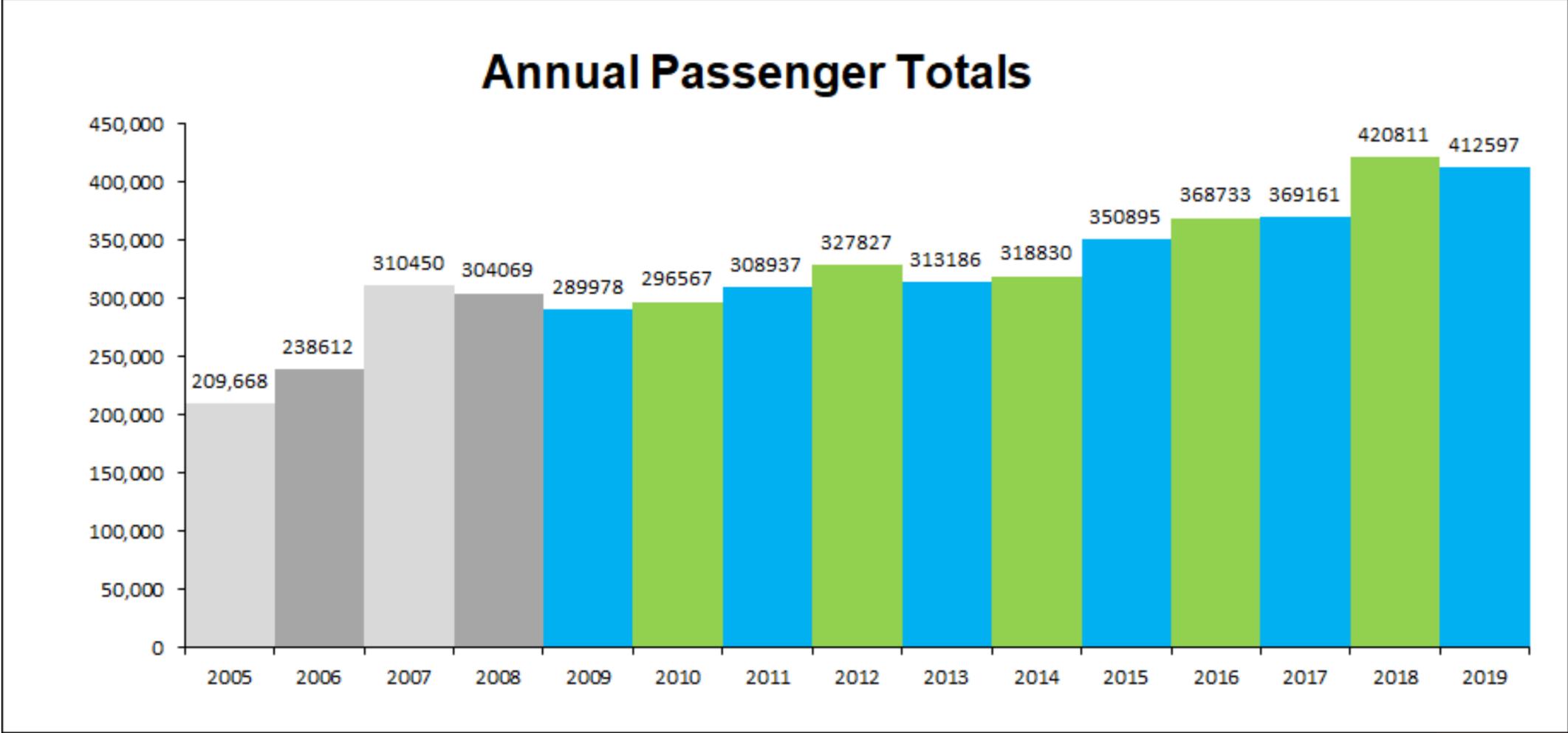


Shell Aviation

YQQ has highly trained aviation fuel staff to provide support to our airline partners, and the broader aviation community.

Maintenance staff continue to develop the strong relationship with this key vendor to improve safety, environmental compliance, and training.

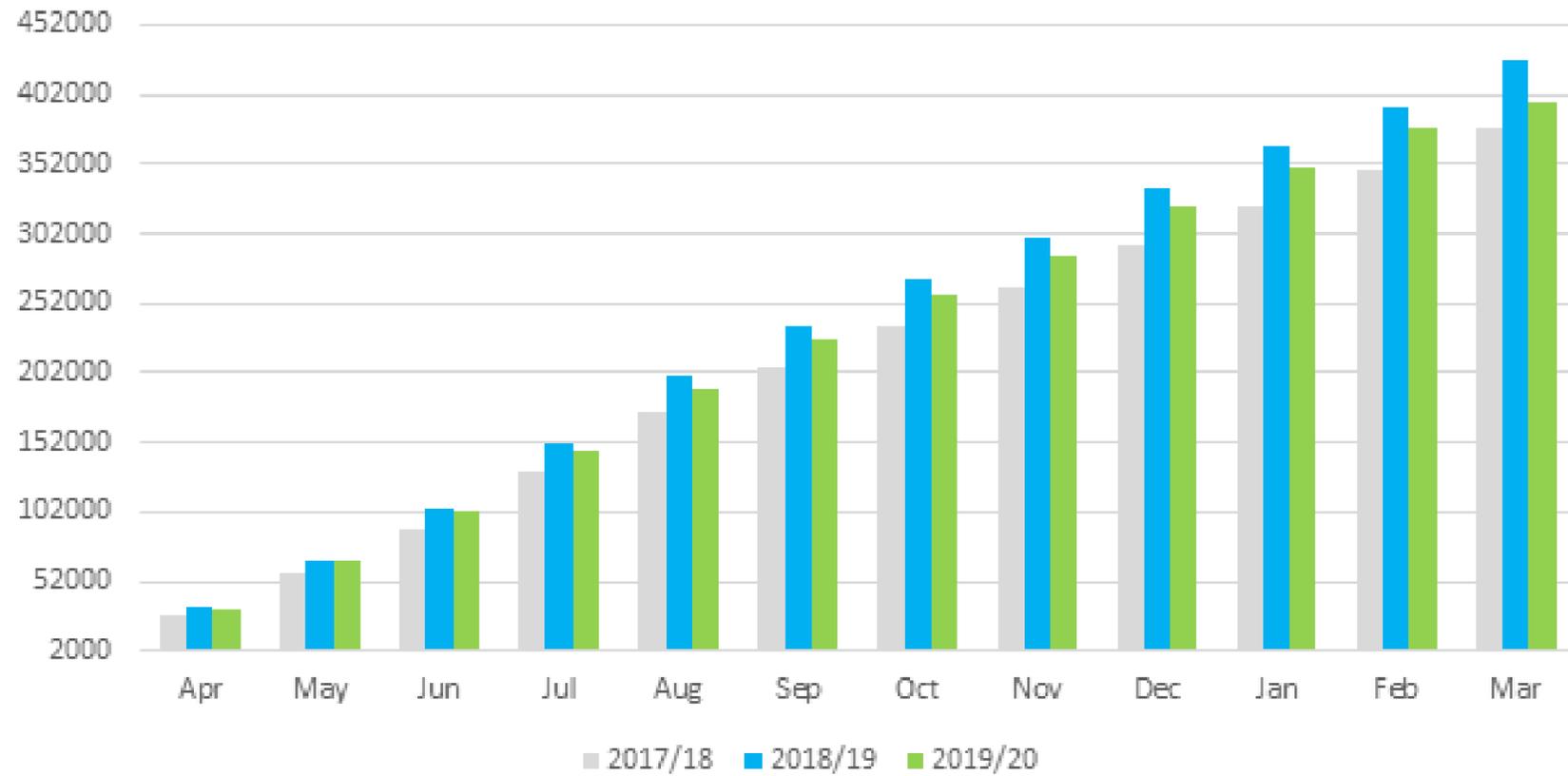
YQQ welcomed 412,597 annual passengers in 2019.



Capacity loss due to 737 MAX 8 grounding and passenger declines due to COVID-19 pulled the fiscal year total to less than 400,000.

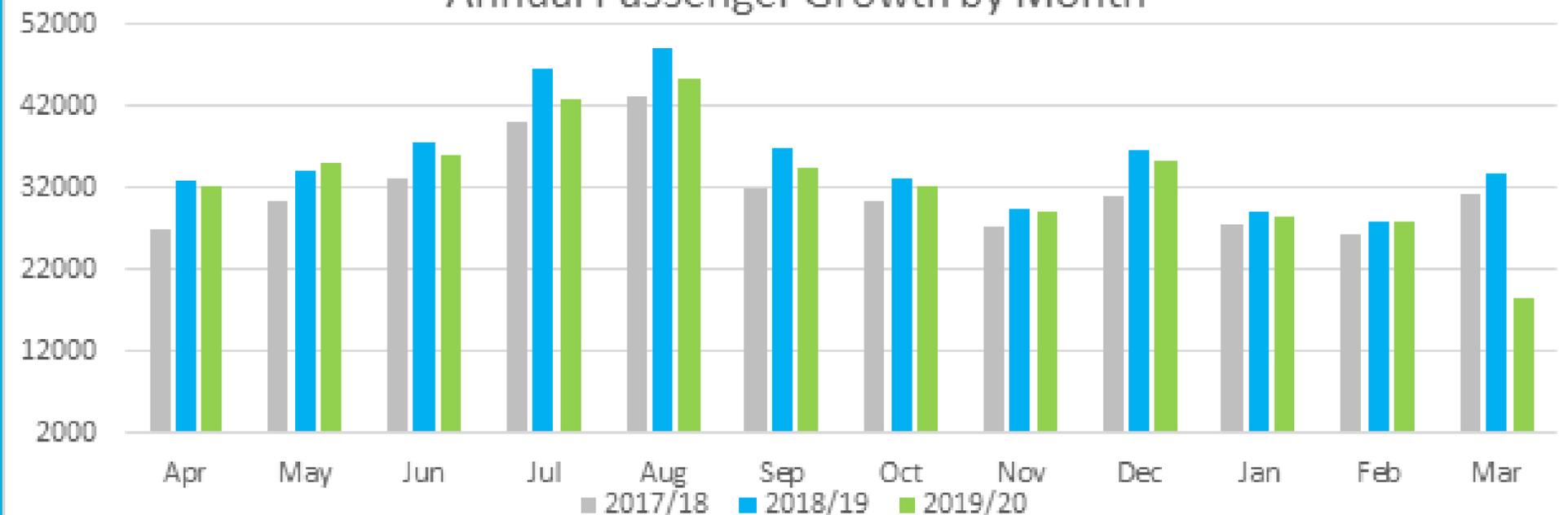
Total passengers in fiscal year 2019-2020 was 396,860

Annual Passenger Growth



Passenger numbers fell slightly in 2019 due to a variety of market factors. The start of 2020 saw an improvement and by February numbers were once again strong. The impact of the pandemic has temporarily reversed this positive trajectory.

Annual Passenger Growth by Month



| Revenue | 2019/20 | 2018/19 |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|
| Total Revenues | \$ 5,546,915 | \$ 5,957,456 |
| Total Expenses | \$ 3,846,361 | \$ 3,733,666 |
| Surplus | \$ 1,012,667 | \$ 2,223,790 |

| Assets | 2019/20 | 2018/19 |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|
| Operating Fund | \$ 3,421,671 | \$ 1,026,261 |
| Capital Assets | \$19,183,727 | \$ 20,566,470 |
| Net Assets | \$22,605,398 | \$ 21,592,731 |

Notes: Surplus reduction due to write-down following revised market appraisal of adjacent lot.

Operating fund increased to provide liquidity for the duration of the pandemic. See audited financial statements for detailed information.

Goal 1 - Air Service

Expand air services to new destinations, and enhance services (passengers and cargo) to current destinations.

- Commissioned leakage study from InterVISTAS to identify potential routes, and evaluate market performance
- Presented business cases to four airlines at the Airport Council International North America (ACI-NA) Jumpstart Conference
- Presented business case to regional carrier to support new route
- Increased capacity and connectivity through Vancouver with Air Canada upgrade to new 78 passenger Q400s (replaced 50 seat Dash 8)
- Improved non-stop service to Vancouver by Pacific Coastal Airlines

To Pursue:

- Support airlines during recovery, and strengthen YQQ's existing routes through integrated marketing campaigns aimed at the local outbound market.
- Identify and promote schedule improvements for existing carriers to feed Calgary and Vancouver hubs.
- Assist all airport tenants (airlines, café, gift shop, car rentals, security, and ground support) to adapt and restore services.
- Support local tourism by participating in joint opportunities that promote the Comox Valley and neighbouring communities.

Goal 2 - Masterplan

Maintain a viable Airport Master Plan.

To Pursue:

- Initiate Airport Master Plan review utilizing lessons from COVID-19
- Continue with ongoing infrastructure needs assessment
- Develop long-term capital plan for infrastructure improvements
- Refine life cycle replacement program
- Secure tenure to Area G; re-evaluate plans for adjacent property



Goal 3 - Finance

Remain financially viable and competitive.

- Revised budget to minimize expenses
- Accessed Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)
- Secured grants from BC Jobs Plan to support professional development and staff training
- Received grant from Ministry of Veterans Affairs as part of Commemorative Partnership Program
- Qualified for rebate from BC Hydro for energy efficient retrofit (lighting)

To Pursue:

- Application of lessons from COVID-19 following review of Master Plan
- Assessment of future grant opportunities for airport infrastructure



Goal 4 - Employees

Attract and retain a talented and motivated team of employees.

- Successfully recruited, and commenced on-boarding of new Deputy Operations Manager
- Ops and Maintenance staff underwent training sessions covering: WHMIS, electrical safety, ramp awareness, fire extinguisher operation, airport evacuation, Airside Vehicle Operator Program (AVOP), biohazard, first aid, and CPR
- Utilized Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS), ensuring retention of skilled labour force
- Continued to foster culture of inclusiveness and respect for diversity, building on the framework of the Safe Harbour program

To Pursue:

- Maintain a viable succession plan
- Support professional development opportunities, particularly online
- Fine tune HR processes to better serve management and staff
- Continue to build on the culture of diversity and respect



YQQ welcomed many guests and dignitaries during the year, celebrated work anniversaries, raised funds for cancer, and got the thumbs up from local cyclists for the new public bike station.

The Star Wars "Make a Wish" send off coordinated by WestJet, Airline Support Services, and CV Geek Society was one young Matteas will never forget.



:Ngamis hereditary chief Tyler Cranmer and K'omoks Dancers



Mayors: Arnott, Wells and Baird



Star Wars Make a Wish



Local cycling groups met up to show support for new public bike station.



Team WestJet Bake Sale



Susan's 15-year pin!

Public Events at YQQ

- Island Good launch - VIEA
- CV Arts exhibit annual opening
- Central Island Artist Studio Tour
- Art Alchemy exhibit annual opening
- Public bike station launch
- Ai Quaneset Blessing Ceremony - K'omoks First Nation
- Ministry of Veterans Affairs - Commemorative Partnership





THE GIFT

Captain David Freeman donated the plane in recognition of all Canadian Veterans, emphasizing the importance of the contributions of First Nations by featuring the 19 Wing Ai Quaneset Badge as roundels.

From left to right: Captain David Freeman, K'omoks Guardian Randy Frank, MP Rachel Blaney, CEO Fred Bigelow



BLESSING CEREMONY

K'omoks First Nation provided ceremonial welcome and blessing dances to celebrate the installation and thank the donors and volunteers.

A series of storyboards will be created and installed to accompany the exhibit and provide information on the project.

Project manager Dave Mellin (facing camera.)



VETERANS AFFAIRS

Honourable Lawrence MacAulay, Minister of Veterans Affairs and Associate Minister of National Defence, visited YQQ to announce a \$13,500 grant from the Commemorative Partnership Program in support of the project.

From left to right. 19 Wing Commander Colonel Dany Poitras, Hereditary Chief of the Kwakiulth, David Knox, Minister of Veterans Affairs Lawrence MacAulay, MP Rachel Blaney, acting CEO Alex Robertson

NIEUPOORT 11 VETERANS MEMORIAL

YQQ AMBASSADORS

Our volunteers give generously of their time and expertise to help visitors and locals on their journeys.

Each year, we celebrate them by hosting social outings, a golf day, and the popular holiday dinner.

The Ambassador Program was temporarily suspended in early March, the first action of the pandemic plan, to ensure the health and safety of these valued team members.

We'll look forward to the time when we can welcome their return.



YQQ's strategic marketing plan utilized digital programmatic, online, print and radio advertising to target key travel sectors and raise awareness of flight offerings. These strategies achieved 4x the industry average click through rate.

- Early adoption of Island Good brand resulted in thousands of dollars in "earned media" exposure
- Expanded membership in Chamber and Destination Marketing associations to improve presence in shared airport catchments, including Parksville, Qualicum Beach, Port Alberni, Ucluelet, Tofino, Campbell River
- In house advertising revenues increased by 30% (increase due to Pattison Outdoor Advertising)
- Website was optimized to generate click through via "Book Now" portal linked to airline reservations



Island GOOD

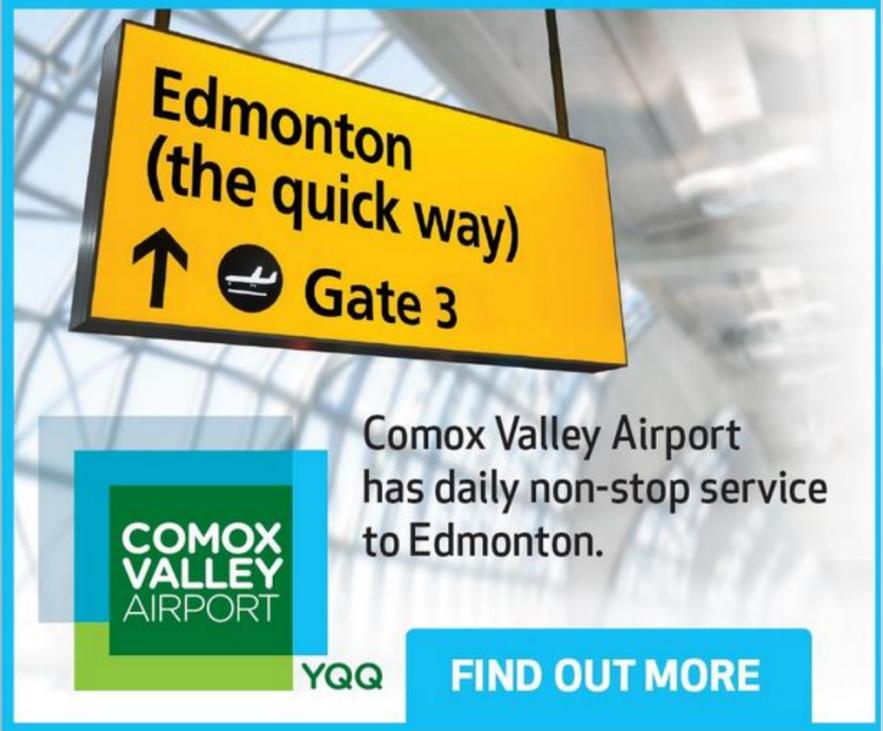
HOME GROWN AND GOOD FOR US ALL.

Comox Valley Airport is proud to support the Island Good program. Look for the wordmark on items at our Mid-Island Gifts shop and at On The Fly Café. It tells you the product is from a grower or producer right here on Vancouver Island.

COMOX VALLEY AIRPORT

Island GOOD

GOOD. TOGETHER.



Edmonton (the quick way)
↑ Gate 3

COMOX VALLEY AIRPORT YQQ

Comox Valley Airport has daily non-stop service to Edmonton.

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Calgary YYC & Edmonton YEG

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Governance

The Comox Valley Airport Commission (CVAC) is the governing authority for the operation of the Comox Valley Airport (YQQ). CVAC is a federally incorporated, non-profit entity that was established through letters patent in 1996. It successfully transitioned to the Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act (NFP Act) in 2014.

CVAC operates civilian aviation facilities at the Comox Valley Airport. YQQ is located on Vancouver Island in the Town of Comox at 19 Wing Comox. CVAC's facilities are located on land that is leased from the Department of National Defence (DND).

DND maintains responsibility for YQQ's airfield and associated systems, which are provided for the use of civil aviation at the discretion of DND in exchange for landing fees.



Governance, continued

The property and business of the Comox Valley Airport Commission is governed by the Board of Directors.

The Board is responsible for establishing the Strategic Direction, making major decisions for the Commission and overseeing management of YQQ's business and affairs.

The Comox Valley Airport Commission's Board of Directors is broadly representative of the Comox Valley community and is comprised of nine directors, nominated as follows:

- Five members are nominated by local government (City of Courtenay, Town of Comox, Village of Cumberland and Comox Valley Regional District).
- At least one member must reside in Courtenay;
- At least one must reside in Comox;
- One member is nominated by the Comox Valley Chamber of Commerce;
- One member is nominated by Comox Valley Economic Development Society;
- Two members are appointed by the Board.



Board of Directors



2019 Board Positions & Committees

Chair: Frank van Gisbergen - ex-officio all committees

Vice Chair: Richard Clarke, Executive, Audit

Secretary: Susan Toresdahl, Governance

Treasurer: Joe Schommer, Executive, Governance

Directors: Andy Frost, Audit, Governance

Nancy Arsenault, Governance

Keith Tatton (resigned)

Wendy Lewis, Executive, Governance

Fred Bates (resigned)

Martin Crilly, Audit, Finance

CEO: Fred Bigelow, ex-officio all committees

Acting CEO: Alex Robertson

Contact/Information

The following documents are available on our website:

- Audited Financial Statements
- Accountability Reports
- Comox Valley Airport Commission Bylaws

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